Effects of wall suction/injection on the linear stability of flat Stokes layers

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Effects of wall suction/injection on the linear stability of flat Stokes layers are investigated. A semi-analytical method is used to examine the stability of time-periodic boundary flows with wall suction/injection. Results show that the onset of instability of the flat Stokes layers can be suppressed by wall suction and enhanced by wall injection.

1. Introduction

This paper presents a study of the effect of a uniform and steady wall suction/injection on the linear stability of flat Stokes layers. The Stokes layer, induced by an infinite rigid plate oscillating sinusoidally in its own plane, is of interest as a prototype problem for time-periodic flows. Wall suction/injection has been widely used as an effective way to control flows (e.g. Joslin 1998; Wu *et al.* 1998), and its effect on the stability of unsteady boundary flows is of significant interest.

A linear stability analysis of flat Stokes layers was first carried out by von Kerczek & Davis (1974) by numerically integrating the time-dependent linearized disturbance equations based on the Floquet theory for a 'finite Stokes layer', in which a stationary upper infinite plate was introduced. For Reynolds number R based on the thickness of the Stokes layer δ less than 800, results showed that the principal Floquet exponent was real and negative, indicating that the flow was stable to the disturbances. Hall (1978) performed a stability analysis of an infinite Stokes layer using a semi-analytical solution of the time-dependent Orr–Sommerfeld equation. Due to the limit of computer power, however, Hall only undertook calculations for $R < 320$. The results demonstrated the existence of a damped continuous spectrum of the Orr–Sommerfeld equation and a set of discrete eigenvalues for certain values of R. Although Hall speculated that the discrete Floquet modes could be unstable for sufficiently large Reynolds numbers, no evidence of instability was detected for the parameters considered. Later, Akhavan, Kamm & Shapiro (1991*b*) also failed to find growing Floquet modes for R up to 1000. Since it has been found experimentally that turbulence emerges for $R > 550$ (Hino, Sawamoto & Takasu 1976; Akhavan, Kamm & Shapiro 1991*a*), the inconsistency between theoretical and experimental results has motivated study of alternative mechanisms, such as quasi-steady theory (Obremski & Morkovin 1969; Cowley 1987; Hall 2003) and nonlinear analysis (Wu & Cowley 1995). Recently, Blennerhassett & Bassom (2002, hereafter referred to as BB) reformulated the technique used by Hall (1978) and performed calculations to higher Reynolds number. They found a critical Reynolds number of about 1416 for disturbance with a wavenumber of $0.38/\delta$.

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Furthermore, it is well known that the asymptotic suction boundary layer is much more stable than the Blasius boundary layer (Hughes & Reid 1965; Hocking 1975; Fransson & Alfredsson 2003). Generally, wall suction/injection is associated with stabilizing/destabilizing the flow. To the best of our knowledge, however, the effects of wall suction/injection on the stability of unsteady flows have never been studied. Here, we extend Hall's semi-analytical method to study the stability characteristics of a Stokes layer subject to wall suction/injection, especially the variation of the critical Reynolds number for different suction/injection rates.

2. Formulation and numerical procedure

Consider the flow of a semi-infinite viscous fluid of viscosity ν induced by a flat plate at $y = 0$ and oscillating with velocity $U_0 \cos \omega t$ in the x-direction. On the wall a uniform normal suction/injection velocity V_0 is prescribed. We take $\delta = \sqrt{2\nu/\omega}$ as the scale of length, U_0 as the scale of velocity, and introduce the non-dimensional time $\tau = \omega t$. There exist two Reynolds numbers in this problem, which are defined by

$$R = U_0 \sqrt{\frac{2}{\nu\omega}}, \quad R_v = V_0 \sqrt{\frac{2}{\nu\omega}}.$$

The sign of R_v prescribes either a suction condition ($R_v < 0$) or injection ($R_v > 0$). The dimensionless form of the basic flow is then given by

$$U = \mathrm{e}^{-Py} \cos(\tau - Qy), \quad V = R_v/R, \quad (2.1)$$

where

$$P(R_v) = \sqrt{\frac{\sqrt{R_v^4 + 64} + R_v^2}{8} - \frac{R_v}{2}}, \quad Q(R_v) = \sqrt{\frac{\sqrt{R_v^4 + 64} - R_v^2}{8}}.$$

Note that U only depends on R_v and the basic flow of a flat Stokes layer is retrieved when $R_v = 0$.

According to the procedure proposed by von Kerczek & Davis (1974), it is easy to prove that, for a fixed R_v, the basic state (2.1) first becomes unstable for two-dimensional disturbances. Hence, only two-dimensional disturbances are considered. The basic flow (2.1) is infinitesimally disturbed to

$$(u, v) = (U, V) + \epsilon \left(\frac{\partial \Psi}{\partial y}, -\frac{\partial \Psi}{\partial x} \right), \quad (2.2)$$

where $\epsilon \ll 1$ and Ψ denotes a disturbance stream function. Since the basic flow is periodic in time and independent of x, we can introduce a wave-like disturbance

$$\Psi(x, y, \tau) = \mathrm{e}^{\mu\tau} \mathrm{e}^{\mathrm{i}ax} \psi(y, \tau) + \text{c.c.} \quad (2.3)$$

where c.c. denotes complex conjugate, a is the real streamwise wavenumber, and the Floquet exponent $\mu = \mu_r + \mathrm{i}\mu_i$ is complex. Function $\psi(y, \tau)$ is 2π-periodic in time and satisfies

$$\left(2\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} + 2\mu + \mathrm{i}aRU + R_v \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \right) \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} - a^2 \right) \psi = \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} - a^2 \right)^2 \psi + \mathrm{i}aRU_{yy}\psi. \quad (2.4a)$$

The boundary conditions are

$$\psi = \psi_y = 0 \quad \text{on} \quad y = 0; \quad \psi, \psi_y \to 0 \quad \text{as} \quad y \to \infty. \quad (2.4b)$$

The problem (2.4) has a symmetry property that if μ, $\psi(y, \tau)$ is a solution, then so is $\tilde{\mu}$, $\tilde{\psi}(y, \tau + \pi)$, where a tilde denotes complex conjugate. Physically, if there exists a disturbance wave propagating in one direction, another wave propagating in the opposite direction with the same growth rate may also occur. This property allows us to restrict the imaginary part of μ to the interval $0 \leqslant \mu_i \leqslant \frac{1}{2}$ without loss of generality.

As ψ is a periodic function of τ, it can be expanded in a Fourier series

$$\psi(y, \tau) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \psi_n(y) e^{in\tau}. \tag{2.5}$$

Substituting (2.5) into (2.4) leads to the following system of equations:

$$\left(\frac{d^2}{dy^2} - R_v \frac{d}{dy} - a^2 - 2\mu - 2in \right) \left(\frac{d^2}{dy^2} - a^2 \right) \psi_n$$
$$= \tfrac{1}{2} ia R \left\{ e^{-C_p y} \left(\frac{d^2}{dy^2} - a^2 - C_p^2 \right) \psi_{n-1} + e^{-C_m y} \left(\frac{d^2}{dy^2} - a^2 - C_m^2 \right) \psi_{n+1} \right\} \tag{2.6}$$

where $C_p = P + iQ$ and $C_m = P - iQ$.

As in Seminara & Hall (1976) and Hall (1978), a solution of (2.6) in a double series expansion can be derived as

$$\psi_n(y) = \sum_{k=-\infty}^{\infty} \left\{ \alpha_k \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} A_{jkn} e^{-f(j,k,n,\gamma_k)y} + \beta_k \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} B_{jkn} e^{-f(j,k,n,a)y} \right\}. \tag{2.7}$$

Here, coefficients A_{jkn} and B_{jkn} can be determined by the recurrence relations given in the Appendix, f takes the form

$$f(j, k, n, \cdot) = \cdot - i(k - n)Q + |k - n|P + 2jP, \tag{2.8}$$

and

$$\gamma_k = \sqrt{R_v^2/4 + a^2 + 2\mu + 2ik} - R_v/2, \tag{2.9}$$

where the branch of the square root with positive real part is taken.

The solution (2.7) decays exponentially and satisfies automatically the boundary conditions as y approaches infinity. The boundary conditions at $y = 0$ require

$$\sum_{k=-\infty}^{\infty} \left\{ \alpha_k \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} A_{jkn} + \beta_k \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} B_{jkn} \right\} = 0, \tag{2.10a}$$

$$\sum_{k=-\infty}^{\infty} \left\{ \alpha_k \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} A_{jkn} f(j, k, n, \gamma_k) + \beta_k \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} B_{jkn} f(j, k, n, a) \right\} = 0, \tag{2.10b}$$

for $n = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots$ implying an infinite set of equations for the unknowns α_k and β_k. If the system has a non-trivial solution, the infinite determinant of the matrix of the coefficients must vanish. Then, the eigenrelation for μ in terms of a, R and R_v can be obtained.

Our numerical treatment follows BB and is outlined here. First, the Fourier series (2.5) are truncated to N leading harmonics, and the index k in (2.7) is limited to the range $-N \leqslant k \leqslant N$. The summations over j in (2.10) are taken to a finite value J. The determinant of the matrix of (2.10) is of order $4N + 2$ and is evaluated by LU-factorization. Muller's iteration method is used to locate the zeros of the determinant. After the eigenvalue μ is determined, the corresponding eigenfunction
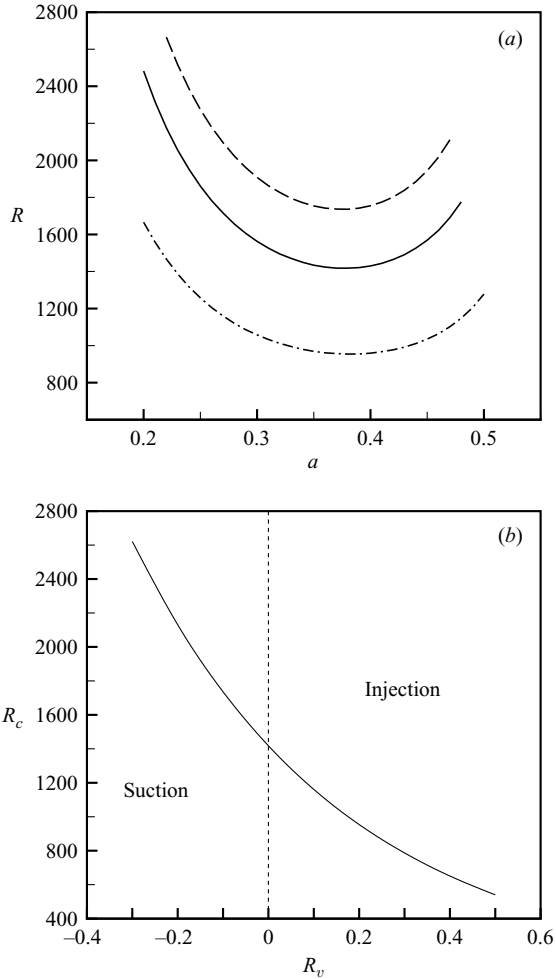
FIGURE 1. (*a*) Neutral stability curves for three values of R_v: $-----$, $R_v = -0.1$; ———, $R_v = 0$; — · —, $R_v = 0.2$. (*b*) The critical Reynolds number R_c as a function of R_v in the range $-0.3 \leqslant R_v \leqslant 0.5$.

$[\alpha_{-N}, \ldots, \alpha_N, \beta_{-N}, \ldots, \beta_N]$ can be solved via inverse iteration. Then the disturbance flow field is reconstructed by the eigenfunction. To obtain the neutral curve, 128-bit arithmetic is needed to retain sufficient accuracy.

3. Results and discussion

To ensure the reliability of the present results, extensive calculations for the stability characteristics of flat Stokes layers without suction/injection (i.e. $R_v = 0$) were carried out. The results, including critical Reynolds number, growth rate, neutral curve, disturbance stream function and enstrophy, agree well with those of BB. We now present typical results on the effect of wall suction/injection on the stability.

Figure 1(*a*) shows the neutral curves for $R_v = -0.1$, 0 and 0.2, obtained by interpolation through a series of neutral points with an increment of $\Delta a = 0.01$. The neutral curve shifts upwards for the suction and downwards for the injection. Although the influence of the suction/injection on the critical wavenumber is somewhat weak,

it is still found that the effect of the wall suction tends to decrease the critical wavenumber, while the effect of the injection is to increase the critical wavenumber.

The critical Reynolds number, R_c, is shown in figure 1(b) for $-0.3 \leqslant R_v \leqslant 0.5$, indicating that R_c monotonically decreases with R_v. Note that the normal velocity V is weak compared to the streamwise basic flow near the wall; however, the stabilizing effect of the wall suction is remarkable so that the critical Reynolds number for $R_v = -0.3$ is about double of that for $R_v = 0$. To identify the critical Reynolds number for $R_v < -0.3$, truncation with $N > 400$ is needed, resulting in the calculation being expansive. Although the results for $R_v < -0.3$ are not shown here, we infer from figure 1(b) that the increase of the amplitude of suction would further stabilize the flow. Correspondingly, the flow is destabilized due to the effect of the wall injection, and R_c decreases monotonically with increasing R_v.

4. Conclusion

A relatively weak wall suction/injection has a significant effect on the linear stability of Stokes layers. The results obtained by an extended formulation of Hall's (1978) semi-analytical method show that the neutral stability curve shifts upwards for wall suction and downwards for wall injection. The critical Reynolds number R_c is a monotonic decreasing function of R_v, indicating a stabilizing effect of the suction and a destabilizing effect of the injection.

Appendix. Recurrence relations

For convenience, define

$$F_p(j, k, n, \cdot) = \left[f^2(j, k, n, \cdot) - a^2 - C_p^2 \right] A_{jkn}, \tag{A 1a}$$

$$F_m(j, k, n, \cdot) = \left[f^2(j, k, n, \cdot) - a^2 - C_m^2 \right] A_{jkn}, \tag{A 1b}$$

$$G_p(j, k, n, \cdot) = \left[f^2(j, k, n, \cdot) - a^2 - C_p^2 \right] B_{jkn}, \tag{A 1c}$$

$$G_m(j, k, n, \cdot) = \left[f^2(j, k, n, \cdot) - a^2 - C_m^2 \right] B_{jkn} \tag{A 1d}$$

and

$$\phi(j, k, n, \cdot) = [f^2(j, k, n, \cdot) - a^2][f^2(j, k, n, \cdot) + R_v f(j, k, n, \cdot) - a^2 - 2\mu - 2in]. \tag{A 2}$$

If we substitute (2.7) for ψ_n into (2.6) and equate the coefficients of the linearly independent terms, then the recurrence relations can be obtained. The coefficients A_{jkn} and B_{jkn} are scaled so that $A_{0kk} = B_{0kk} = 1$ and the remainder coefficients are determined as follows:

if $k \leqslant n - 1$,

$$\phi(j, k, n, \gamma_k) A_{jkn} = \tfrac{1}{2} i a R [F_p(j, k, n - 1, \gamma_k) + F_m(j - 1, k, n + 1, \gamma_k)], \tag{A 3a}$$

$$\phi(j, k, n, a) B_{jkn} = \tfrac{1}{2} i a R [G_p(j, k, n - 1, a) + G_m(j - 1, k, n + 1, a)]; \tag{A 3b}$$

if $k \geqslant n+1$,

$$\phi(j, k, n, \gamma_k) A_{jkn} = \tfrac{1}{2} \mathrm{i} a R [F_p(j-1, k, n-1, \gamma_k) + F_m(j, k, n+1, \gamma_k)], \qquad (A\,3c)$$

$$\phi(j, k, n, a) B_{jkn} = \tfrac{1}{2} \mathrm{i} a R [G_p(j-1, k, n-1, a) + G_m(j, k, n+1, a)]; \qquad (A\,3d)$$

and if $k = n$,

$$\phi(j, k, n, \gamma_k) A_{jkn} = \tfrac{1}{2} \mathrm{i} a R [F_p(j-1, k, n-1, \gamma_k) + F_m(j-1, k, n+1, \gamma_k)], \qquad (A\,3e)$$

$$\phi(j, k, n, a) B_{jkn} = \tfrac{1}{2} \mathrm{i} a R [G_p(j-1, k, n-1, a) + G_m(j-1, k, n+1, a)], \qquad (A\,3f)$$

for $j = 0, 1, 2, \ldots$.

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